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THE SCHOOL LIBRARY.

It was our intention to have written an article on the important enterprise of preparing, under the sanction of the Board of Education, a suitable series of books for School-District Libraries. Before carrying our purpose into full effect, a most intelligent friend of our Common Schools, and one who has labored for many years in promoting their welfare, sent us the subjoined communication. We gladly substitute it for our own, and cordially commend it to the attention of our readers.

How shall I read ?

What shall I read ?

When shall I read ?

That which we may properly consider as "the *previous question*," *Why* shall I read ? in that, in point of time, it is antecedent to all three of the interrogatories with which we begin this article, we must suppose that the child has already answered, to his own satisfaction. For, it can hardly be supposed that, in this country, any child will have attained to the age of admission, even into an infant school, without having already learned that *every-body* who is *any-body* reads ; and without having drawn for himself, the very logical conclusion that, unless he will consent to be *no-body*, he, too, must read. In our day, it is revealed even unto babes that the road to consideration among men is knowledge, and that the key of knowledge is *reading*. The question, *Why* shall I read ? then, we suppose the child to have answered before he goes to school ; and the first question that he asks, as he enters the schoolhouse, is the first that we have asked in entering upon our subject. But this question we ask not with a view of answering it ourselves, but merely to say that this is *the* great question which every child has to learn to solve, and to solve first, in the course of his school discipline. In solving it, he learns the *art* of reading.

In learning this art, he is exercised upon those "selections" or "compilations" or other manuals which have been prepared with a special view to facilitating the progress of the young *apprentice*—for the learning of an art is strictly an apprenticeship—towards a mastery of the art in question.

The third of the questions at the head of this article relates to the acquisition, not of the art, but of the *habit* of reading. In point of time, it holds the last place of the three ; for, unless it is met by the short answer, "Never," its answer is commensurate with the whole line of life. But, in point of importance, the question, *When* shall I read ? is secondary to the question to which this article points, *What* shall I read ?

But will the habit of reading be formed, when the art shall have been acquired ?

Pretty certainly not, as the world goes, unless, while he is acquiring the art of reading, the young learner finds something that is worth reading,—something, that is, which answers the demand that the Creator puts into every child's lips—the demand that led the child into the schoolhouse—the

demand for *knowledge*. If this innate and insatiable thirst does not find *something* to slake it, in the books that are put in *his* way while he is wading through the drudgery of the art, he will be sure, if he is a wise child, to get out of *their* way whenever he is relieved from that drudgery, and go somewhere else for the knowledge that he must and will have.

Most obviously, then, "the greatest of the three" questions placed at the head of these remarks, is the second—*What shall I read?*

And *all-important* to every child, as the question is, *What shall I read?* the public, till very lately, has done nothing—literally, *nothing*, to answer it. But, some portions of our American public—our own Commonwealth, and her noble sister, New York,* especially—have recently given proof, that they are not unmindful of the obligations of each of the successive generations of men, to place, in the hands of its immediate successor, books, which shall themselves answer the question, which that successor ought to ask, and will ask,—*What shall I read?*

The art of reading is one which, like almost all other arts in life, may be perverted to evil, as it may be converted to good uses. Shall this art be, in the hands of him who has acquired it, a drag-net to be thrown into the depths of the sea of literature, to bring up all sorts of "odd fishes," the dead and rotten, as well as the worthless living; or shall it be a nicely-baited and skilfully-managed hook, that shall take only those in which there is both vitality and nourishment? The governments of these two States have determined to do what in them lies, to help the young fishermen, by wise and timely counsel, to "gather the good into their vessels, and to cast the bad away." Not satisfied with teaching their respective children the art of reading, these States, in a deep feeling of the responsibility of a parent state, have resolved to go one step further, and make that art a blessing, both to the children and to the State itself.

To this end, so worthy of the wisdom and the best energies of a State, both New York and Massachusetts have lately turned their earnest attention. The first movement was made in New York, by the efforts and liberality of one of her most patriotic and venerable sons,—Mr. James Wadsworth of Geneseo, who, some few years ago, made to the State a munificent donation, for the purpose of furnishing its several school districts with a small select library of such works of science and literature, published in a plain and neat form, as should lead the children, while yet at school, into the habitual exercise of the art that they were acquiring, and, at the same time, fill their minds with useful knowledge.

The idea, thus first manifested in action, if not first conceived, by a public-spirited individual, was soon felt through the whole frame of—must we not say?—the most public-spirited of all our sisterhood of States. Your readers may remember—we hope they have not forgotten—that no longer ago than your sixth number, you expressed the admiration, which all must feel—which all but the *dead* must feel—that, "in addition to an annual sum of fifteen thousand dollars given to her colleges, and of forty thousand dollars given to her academies," that State "distributes annually to the Common Schools the sum of two hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars!"—and that, "by a law passed in April last, (April, 1838,) one hundred and ten thousand dollars a year for three years—one half raised by the several towns, and one half appropriated by the State—are to be specifically applied to the purchase of libraries for the several district schools." "A third of a million of dollars," you well exclaimed, in unaffected surprise and delight, "to be expended for the seeds of knowledge and virtue, which are to be sown in that most prolific of all soils, the minds and hearts of its children!" What will your readers say, now, when we tell them that, even while you were thus illuminating your pages with the record of our sister's

* Michigan has also enacted laws in reference to School Libraries.—Ed.

glorious deeds, she was doubly illuminating those of her own Statute Book, by doubling the time for which, only a year before, she had made such a munificent provision for the highest wants of all her children! For by her law passed April 16, 1839, "the provisions of the act of the last year are extended three years more, so as to make the period during which this tax is compulsory upon the districts, *six* instead of *three* years."* So that now we must exclaim, not "one third," but two thirds of a million of dollars, to be expended by a single State, for the seeds of knowledge and virtue, which are to be sown in that most prolific of all soils, the minds and hearts of its children! Well may the writer, from whom we have last quoted, ask—"Who shall venture to surmise the amount of benefit, in all time to come, from such an appropriation of public moneys?"

In the mean time, however, Massachusetts, quick, as she ever is, to avail herself of every suggestion, by which she may still more fortify the already stable foundations that, in the education of her children, she has laid for their welfare and her own true glory, by an act, passed April 12, 1837, authorized each legally-constituted school district in this Commonwealth, to raise money by a tax, to the amount of thirty dollars for the first year, and of ten dollars for any subsequent year, to be expended in establishing and maintaining a Common School Library and apparatus, for the use of the children of that district.

We are happy to avail ourselves, here, of the language of the Second Annual Report of the Board of Education, (supposed to be that of its chairman, the Governor of the Commonwealth,) in order to lay distinctly and officially before our readers, such information as, at the date of that Report, was in the possession of the Board.

The Board have regarded the law of the 12th of April, 1837, as the necessary result of the school system of Massachusetts, as it has existed from time immemorial. The previous want of a regular provision for school libraries, must be considered a serious defect in that system. To what avail are our youth taught to read, if no facilities exist for obtaining books? The keys of knowledge are useless to him who has no access to the volumes to be unlocked. Although it is certainly true, that no part of our State is wholly deficient in valuable works of science and literature, yet it must be freely confessed, they do not exist in such plenty as could be desired. In a portion of the towns, there are social libraries. These, it is believed, generally depend on the precarious support of annual subscriptions, and are, too many of them, in a neglected and declining state. They can, of necessity, be conveniently accessible only to that portion of the population, who live near the place where they are deposited. Where they are kept up and supplied with a selection of the valuable works daily issuing from the press, they are universally admitted to be blessings to the community.

By the act of 12th of April, 1837, the Legislature has put it in the power of every district in the Commonwealth to possess itself of this blessing; and the Board regard it as a very interesting part of their duty, to do whatever may be in their power to facilitate the execution of this law. Among the causes, it is supposed, which have hitherto prevented the districts from availing themselves of the authority to commence the formation of these libraries, is the difficulty of making the selection:—a difficulty of considerable magnitude, when but a small sum is to be expended, and it is necessary to send to some distant place for a supply of books. To remove this obstacle in some degree, the Board of Education determined, at an early period of the present year, to recommend to some respectable publishing house to issue from the press a collection of works as a Common School Library, to consist of two series; the one adapted for the use of children, the other for a maturer class of readers. The proposal has been acceded to by Messrs. Marsh, Capen, Lyon, and Webb, of Boston. The enterprise is to be entirely at the expense and risk of the publishers, who agree to execute the works in a style, and to furnish them to those who may choose to become purchasers, at a rate, to be approved by the Board, and which was ascertained to be the lowest, at which an arrangement could be made for its satisfactory execution. Each book in the series is to be submitted to the inspection of every member of the Board, and no work to be recommended, but on their unanimous approval. Such a recommendation, it was believed, would furnish a sufficient assurance to the public, that a sacred adherence would be had to the principle, which is embodied in the legislation of the Commonwealth, on the subject of school books, and which provides that "school

* New York American.

committees shall never direct to be purchased, or used in any of the town schools, any books, which are calculated to favor the tenets of any particular sect of Christians."

It is their purpose to assist and encourage the publishers in the selection and publication of a series of volumes, well adapted for the use proposed, to consist of a portion of the most approved works in science and literature, with which our language is enriched, executed in a style, and afforded at a price, which will put them generally within the reach of the school districts of the Commonwealth. The Board have great satisfaction in stating, that, in the preparation of a portion of the books to be published as a Common School Library, the publishers have been led to expect the assistance of many of the most distinguished writers of our own country.

We are now able to add, for the information and encouragement of all who are interested in this great and good work, that a large force, both literary and mechanical, has for some time been employed upon it, and that a number of the works of each of 'THE SCHOOL LIBRARY' series, are in such a state of forwardness as will enable the publishers very shortly to answer the orders of individuals or committees from our own, or from other States, who shall be disposed to send for volumes of either series, upon the ground of their own knowledge of the character of the several works, or, in defect of that knowledge, upon the ground of their confidence in the judgment and impartiality of the Board of Education, constituted, as it is, of men of acknowledged distinction for literature and science, and belonging to various religious denominations and political parties, the unanimous consent of whom is necessary to the enrolment of each of the works upon the list.

This Library, introduced into the Common Schools, and gradually swelling under the eyes of the children; produced, as it will be, by writers of each sex, and consequently adapted to the tastes as well as the wants of each, and designed for the instruction of all, in those matters that are indispensable to the wellbeing of all; will open a beautiful and inviting vista, to those who are just stepping into the paths of Learning, and will do much towards making those paths to become, like the ways of Learning's sister, Wisdom, "ways of pleasantness." If wisely administered by the several committees and teachers, they may be made to operate as a powerful stimulus, to urge on such as might otherwise be disposed to lag behind, in their literary progress. They will open young eyes with increased keenness of vision, upon the beauties and glories of God's works; for they will teach them that a closer attention to the objects of external nature, will throw over all of them a new charm, however charming they may already have appeared. They will clothe the homely duties and labors of the house and the field with the dignity with which God originally clothed them, and of which man has perversely done much to strip them. "The farmer and mechanic, and even the housewife," Judge Buel well remarks, "require professional books,—books that will instruct them in their several employments—that will render their labors more enlightened, more pleasant, more profitable, more respectable,—as much as the lawyer, the physician, or the clergy require professional books to perfect them in their several vocations." This instruction—this preparation for the pleasant and profitable discharge of the actual duties of life—it is the object of 'THE SCHOOL LIBRARY' to give. It will contain works that treat of domestic and rural economy; of agricultural processes, and mechanical operations and implements; of chemical substances and changes, of atmospherical phenomena, and of the mighty but mysterious host of physical agents that fill the earth and air with their ministrations of good. They will open young ears to the sweet voices of the seasons, and help them to understand the testimony, that they all four give, to the wisdom and goodness as well as to the presence and power of Him who hath appointed them. They will also inculcate the fundamental doctrines of Christian morals and piety. While God is visiting the earth and watering it, while He is settling the furrows thereof, and making it soft with showers, and blessing the springing thereof; the farmer,

safe within doors, whose eyes 'THE SCHOOL LIBRARY' has once opened to the profit and pleasure of holding converse with his books, will hardly leave his snug and quiet home, for the sake of moistening his own clay in a bar-room.

And, if we must, or if others will, look at the expense of these little treasures of knowledge and wisdom, that may thus be thrown open in every school district for the benefit of "the vicinage," how must that sink, in the estimation of every true man, when compared with the *pecuniary* advantage, to say nothing of the higher considerations of knowledge and virtue, that must and will be derived from the investment! Compared with the increased productiveness of a field, cultivated in the sunshine which a good agricultural book will throw upon it, what is the price of the book? One might as wisely complain that his seed wheat is thrown away, as to say that money, thus invested, is so much money lost.

Viewing the subject of Common School Libraries in this light, we cannot but urge upon our friends, in conclusion, to be moving as promptly and as efficiently as they may, to supply the want which, without such an appendage, every school must feel. We entreat them not to consider that they have performed all their duty—that they have fulfilled all righteousness—to their children, by teaching them, at the schoolhouse, *How* they shall read, while to the main question, "*What* shall we read?" they have given no answer.

REV. HUBBARD WINSLOW'S LECTURE.

[Concluded from p. 166.]

2. It is well also for the teacher to be under the impulse of a motive to secure the *grateful remembrance and affectionate interest of his pupils*, in years and ages to come. Nor let this be considered a selfish and unworthy motive. Even God, Himself, though infinitely exalted above all necessities, is yet desirous of securing the affections and the gratitude of his rational creatures. It is as truly the part of a good and generous mind to desire to be loved, as it is to love. The most exalted and benevolent Being that ever honored our world with his presence, not only *loved* mankind, and gave Himself a sacrifice for them, but He seeks in return *their* grateful remembrance, love, confidence, and praise. The prospect of this reward, was one of the motives which brought Him down from the skies, supported and encouraged Him in his labors, sustained Him in the agonies of the garden, and on the cross. But was there aught of base selfishness in Him? No. It is not selfish—it is not wrong—to seek the approbation and love of our fellow-beings, if it is sought by sincere, honest, righteous, endeavors to do them good.

It will have a happy effect upon the conduct of the teacher, to be under the influence of this motive. It will put him upon his guard to omit nothing, to say and do nothing, which will not bear the favorable remembrance of his pupils hereafter. What will they think of this? he will often inquire with himself, when they are grown up to mature age, when they have learned how to estimate my conduct, when they shall see its effects on their character and destiny? Will they bless me, or will they execrate me, for the course I am now taking with them? Will they then say, What an irritable, passionate, ill-natured, churlish being had the charge of my tender years, and how have the disastrous effects followed me in my disposition through life? Or will they say, What a heartless, indolent, inefficient teacher was placed over me, and now I have to suffer the effects of it, in a partial and miserable education? or will they say, What a pusillanimous, time-serving, capricious, irresolute person was appointed to govern me, that I was allowed to have my own way, never subdued to the yoke of obedience, and must now reap the sad fruits in an ungovernable temper, an

uneducated mind, vicious habits, and ruined character? Or, should they so far escape the disastrous effects of their early training by their teachers, as to rise to future excellence and greatness, shall they always have it to remember, and to say, "No thanks to our teacher?"

On the other hand, "can I look forward to the time," says the teacher to himself, "when these pupils, however they may regard my conduct now, will look upon it with approbation and gratitude?—when they will appreciate all my kindness, gentleness, love, forbearance, as they feel its happy effects in their own bosoms,—when they will admire that zeal and fidelity, with which I pursued and urged them on, and inspired them with enthusiasm for knowledge, and compelled them to be thorough and persevering,—when they will be truly thankful for that wisdom, firmness, independence, and decision, with which I brought them into subjection, and learned them to reign as princes in the earth, by first training them to obey? Will they thus recognise me, as an important means of making them what they are, and bless the day that first saw me as their teacher? Will they follow me with their benedictions while I live; comfort me with their testimonials of gratitude, when laid aside by age and sickness;—and when I am dead, will they honor my grave with a tear of affection, and say, the friend and teacher of my youth is departed? Above all, shall I come up before them with a grateful remembrance; at the resurrection of the just? And long—long ages after all the possessions and honors of this world shall have perished, will these my pupils bring to me their tribute of grateful and happy remembrance, for having been instrumental in directing their steps to the kingdom of God?"

These are questions which every teacher will do well frequently to ask himself; and the teacher who has not yet felt the force of the motives which they involve, has an important lesson yet to learn.

3. The last motive which I shall notice, is shortest to express, and most important to consider; it is the *glory of God*. This is the loftiest, noblest, most powerful and efficacious, of all conceivable motives, the highest and best that ever entered a human soul, and that without which all other motives are utterly destitute of any true moral excellence. It is important that this motive should enter into the conduct of *all* men, in *all* they do; but, preeminently important is it in the teacher and guardian of youthful minds. These minds, be it ever remembered, God made in his own image, and made especially for Himself. They are his choice treasures—his jewels. He counts every thing else in the world, of little value compared with the race of human minds. These alone He has purposed to spare alive, and rescue from the devouring flames, with which the heavens and earth will be consumed. He made them to glorify and enjoy him for ever. This they can do only through knowledge, virtue, and holiness. That they may secure these, teacher, he has intrusted them to you. I know not that he could have possibly put into your hands a more sacred trust. Certainly, of all the beings and objects to be found in *this* world, nothing, for value as estimated by God, could any where be found.

And He has committed to your fidelity these valuable minds, in the most interesting and decisive period of their existence—the period when, preeminently, their characters are moulded; when their destinies are determined; when the great problem is solved, whether they shall for ever glorify and enjoy God in his kingdom, or be banished from his presence into outer darkness and woe.

Now the most important of all questions for the teacher of children to ask himself, is, For what end did God bring these children into existence, and how is that end to be secured? What would He have them to become? How can they be made capable of glorifying Him, and what would He have me to do in making them so? Would He have me inspire them with a deep and strong sense of their accountability to Him? Would He have me teach them practically and thoroughly the great lessons of subjection to rightful

authority? Would He have me show them the evil of sin, the danger and ruin of vice; the blessings of obedience to Him, and the happiness of wisdom's ways? Would He have me elevate high their aims in life; discipline them to thorough and persevering study; inculcate upon their opening and forming minds the importance of truth, of honesty, of industry, of generosity, of large and noble views, of affectionate and devoted piety towards God, and of lives devoted to doing good in his service?

It is by such characters as these, shining in the lives, and living and abounding in the fruits, of men, that God is glorified. It is by such, that something of his own excellence is multiplied, and made to shine forth in the world. Let the teacher ask himself what *he* can do towards forming his pupils to such characters, and whether he is actually doing all in his power towards it.

Living and acting daily with such views, and with such motives, he cannot fail to be successful in his labor. Although the noisy world may not give him her shouts and hosannahs, and although even parents and children may at present but poorly appreciate his work, the long arrears of gratitude will at length be paid. He will see the desire of his eyes in the exalted character, usefulness, and happiness of those for whose welfare he toiled, and, in ages of eternal retribution, many shall rise up and call him blessed. His it shall be to shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.

[For the Common School Journal.]

THE ADVANTAGES OF COMMON SCHOOLS, AND THE DANGERS TO WHICH THEY ARE EXPOSED.

Addressed to the Professional Men of Massachusetts.

NO. IV.

GENTLEMEN,—The position which I have maintained thus far, is, that high schools and academies, when multiplied to the extent that they now are, are injurious to the cause of Common School education. I have offered several considerations to sustain this position. And, however ill I may have succeeded in convincing you of the truth of my position, I have the consolation of knowing that many of the most intelligent men in the community entertain the opinions I have expressed. A convention of the friends of education in the county of Hampshire, among whom were some of their most intelligent men, adopted resolutions expressive of this opinion. Hon. S. G. Goodrich, who has written so much for the rising generation under the fictitious name of Peter Parley, in one of his most popular works, 'Fireside Education,' labors to show that the hopes of the country depend upon Common Schools, and that higher institutions may exert a paralyzing influence. The position I have taken, is also sustained by one, who has better means of information than any other man in the Commonwealth. The Secretary of the Board of Education, speaking on this subject, in his Report to the Board, dated January 1, 1838, says, "When established, private schools and academies tend strongly to diminish the annual appropriation for the schools; they draw their ablest recruits from the Common Schools, and by being able to offer a higher compensation, they have a preemptive right to the best qualified teachers; while simultaneously the district schools are reduced in length, deteriorated in quality, and to the same extent bereft of talents competent for their instruction."

But we are not left to conjecture, nor even to the opinions of men on this subject. The School Returns for the last four years contain facts which are conclusive. We have no exact rule by which to measure the standing of schools in the different towns. But, generally speaking, the amount of money raised, and the compensation given to teachers for their services,

will furnish us with a criterion sufficiently accurate to judge of their relative standing. Take this criterion, and you will generally find, that in towns where academies and high schools are established, the town schools are neglected. If we compare towns in different and remote parts of the Commonwealth, where the amount of wages and the value of board are essentially different, there would be a fallacy in the argument. But if we can take towns of the same general standing and character, in all other respects, and situated in the same section of country, and can show that less money is raised, and a less sum is paid for wages in a town where an academy is located, than in a corresponding town where there is none, the argument is perfect. By examining the School Returns, it will be perceived that academies and high schools have produced an injurious effect upon Common Schools. I have made a very full examination, and I feel strongly supported in the position I have taken.

Take the Returns from the town of Templeton, in the county of Worcester. During the years 1834, 5, and 6, that town raised for the support of town schools, the average sum of \$780, and paid their male teachers the sum of \$15, per month; during the same years, they supported a high school at the average cost of \$440. But in the year 1836, their high school went down; and consequently, in 1837, they raised by taxation for their town schools the sum of \$1,300, being \$520 more than the average during the three preceding years, and increased the wages of their male teachers from \$15 up to \$21 per month; that is, if we estimate the board (which is not set down separately from the wages in 1837) at the average price of board in the three preceding years. Here is a striking illustration of the principle for which we have contended. It would seem that the good people of Templeton were willing to pay about such a sum for the cause of education. When their select school was in operation, between \$400 and \$500 were withheld from the town schools, but when that school went down, they freely gave that sum to the town schools.

Our position is illustrated and confirmed in the same way by the Returns from Princeton, in the same county. From 1834 to 1835, inclusive, they paid their male teachers \$15 per month, and raised the average sum of \$630 for the support of their schools; during the same period, they paid annually the sum of \$430 for a high school. But the Return for 1837 shows a very different state of things. The wages paid to teachers rose from \$15 to \$20 per month, and the appropriation for the schools rose from \$630 to \$810; and the sum paid for private instruction was reduced from \$430 to \$125. These results concur with those from Templeton in sustaining our position.

A comparison of the towns which support academies with those which do not, will show their influence upon town schools. The towns of Leominster and Millbury are substantially equal in population and valuation; and by the Returns of 1836, (and I take that year, only because the Returns of 1837 do not show the price of wages distinct from board,) Leominster paid \$20 per month to male teachers, and Millbury \$12 50. And why was this? During that year Leominster paid \$150 for private instruction, and Millbury \$600. Sterling and Dudley are towns of the same class, the one exceeding a trifle in population and the other in valuation. In 1836, Sterling paid her male teachers \$19 per month and Dudley \$12; and yet Dudley the same year supported an academy at the charge of \$450, while Sterling paid nothing for private instruction.

The town of Concord, in Middlesex county, in 1836, paid her male teachers only \$13 37½ per month, and the neighboring town of Lincoln, less in population and valuation by more than one half, paid her male teachers \$20 per month. And yet Concord paid \$1,000 to support private schools, while Lincoln paid nothing for private instruction. Waltham, during the same year, paid \$1,100 for private instruction, while the adjoining town of Water-

town paid only \$130, and yet Waltham paid her teachers \$11 per month less than Watertown. Pepperell, during the same year, paid \$850 for private instruction, while the neighboring town of Shirley paid nothing, and yet Shirley paid the teachers of her winter schools, as might be expected, \$5 23 per month more than Pepperell.

Go into any part of the Commonwealth, and you will find the same state of things. The good people of Northampton have seen the evil, and are attempting a reformation. In 1834, they raised for the support of schools but \$2,375, and at the same time they were expending \$2,900 for select schools. But by the last Return it will be seen that they have reduced their expenditure for select schools \$1,200, and the consequence has been that they have added \$1,625 to their town appropriation, bringing it up to \$4,000. The town of Dorchester, during the years, 1834, 5, and 6, paid the average sum of \$1,980 annually for high schools, and at the same time were paying the teachers of their winter schools the sum of \$14 per month. The evil was discovered, and a successful effort has been made to correct it. The last Return shows that the sum of \$1,980 for select schools has been reduced to \$400, and the price of wages has been raised from \$14 up to \$30 per month, allowing the same sum for board in 1837, which was paid the two preceding years.

The Returns from all parts of the State show that where high schools are patronised, town schools decline. Hingham, noted for its three high schools, paid the male teachers of their town schools, the miserable sum of \$12 per month, while the little town of Hull, with her thirty-seven scholars, came up to the work like a man, and paid her teacher \$18 per month. The flourishing town of Haverhill, with a population of more than 4,700, can pay over \$1,600 for private schools, and suffer her town schools to be taught by masters worth, it would seem, but \$14 per month. In Amherst, the seat of science and of literature, the sum of \$1,696 was paid for private instruction, in the year 1836, while, in the same year, she paid her male teachers but \$11 per month. Stockbridge, in 1836, paid \$5,860 for private instruction, while her winter schools were taught by men worth \$11 per month. Westfield, with her flourishing academy, supported at about \$1,500, paid her teachers the insignificant sum of \$12 per month; and Wilbraham, with her noted academy, supported at an annual cost of \$3,500, affords her town school teachers \$12 per month. Deerfield supports a high school at the cost of \$700, and pays the teachers of her winter schools \$9 per month. Greenfield paid, in 1836, \$2,500 to sustain her high schools, and suffered her winter schools to be taught by persons worth \$11 per month. Northfield, in 1835, (I take that year, for in 1836 she made no return,) could afford the teachers of her winter schools but \$8 per month, but could sustain an academy at a cost of \$400. The School Returns are full of such details, but I forbear to transcribe them.

We ought, in justice, to say that the towns spoken of in the last paragraph have employed one or more females to teach their winter schools, and as they were employed for a less sum than was given to male teachers, the numbers stated above may be a trifle less than their male teachers received. But this plea in their behalf does not help them in the least. It is a plea, which, though it may help them in one particular, implicates them in another. It shows that they have been willing to permit their winter schools to be taught by females, who, according to the returns from these very towns, received on an average but \$5 80 per month. As the winter season is the time when the young men in the country generally attend school, we should suppose that they ought to be supplied with teachers worth more than \$5 or \$6 per month. And several of these towns, during the year mentioned, actually paid their female teachers but \$4 75 per month—a sum which could not command teachers of a very high character. The last returns show that the counties of Hampden, Franklin, and Berkshire, gave their male

teachers, during the past year, but \$18 per month, including board. These are the lowest prices paid, in the State ; and yet these counties pay for select schools a sum approaching much nearer the whole sum paid by taxation for the support of Common Schools, than any other counties in the State. There is another fact, that ought to be stated. In the towns where high schools are supported, there is more irregularity in the Returns, than in other towns of the same standing. Several of the Returns from these towns show an almost total disregard of the school law. The school committees neglect their duty, and suffer the teachers too, whose services are worth but \$9 or \$10 per month, to select the books for the schools ! This fact speaks volumes.

Another astounding fact is stated by the Secretary of the Board of Education, in his first Annual Report. Speaking of the influence of select schools, he says, "Under this silent, but rapid corrosion, it recently happened, in one of the most flourishing towns in the State, having a population of more than three thousand persons, that the principal district school actually ran down, and was not kept for two years." "I have been repeatedly assured," continues he, "where every bias of my informants would lead them to extenuate and not magnify the facts, that in populous villages, and central districts, where there is naturally a concentration of wealth and intelligence, and where, therefore, the Common School ought to be the best in the town, it was the poorest."

There is another important fact that ought to be stated, as it bears directly upon this subject. The school law requires that all towns consisting of five hundred families should maintain a school at least ten months in each year, for the benefit of all the inhabitants in the town, in which the higher branches are required to be taught. The Secretary of the Board of Education, in his first Annual Report, stated that there were *twenty-nine* towns in the Commonwealth to which this provision of law applied, that neglected its observance. In his second Report, made in December last, he says, "Of the twenty-nine rich and flourishing towns bound by law to keep a school at least ten months in each year, 'for the benefit of all the inhabitants of the town,' and which were reported last year as violating this law, by non-compliance, only two, viz. Nantucket and Taunton, have since established the schools required. It will be recollected that this class of towns takes precedence of almost all others in wealth ; that they spend a far less proportion of money per scholar, for the support of public schools, than the poorer, and more sparsely populated towns, while, at the same time, they spend a far greater proportion of money for private schools."

Here is a practical illustration of the effect of private schools. We can go through the Commonwealth, and the position I have taken, will hold good. We have instituted another comparison. We have gone through with a calculation to ascertain what towns have generally paid most upon the scholar, for the support of schools, and we generally find that those towns which support high schools pay less to support Common Schools than towns where private schools are not sustained. Take the county of Franklin, where high schools are as numerous as in any part of the State, and the average sum raised by taxes and voluntary contributions, for the support of Common Schools, is \$2 05 upon the whole number of scholars between the ages of four and sixteen. But the six towns which pay the largest sums for high schools, and which are some of the wealthiest towns in the county, paid the last year for the support of Common Schools, but \$1 95 per scholar ; showing a falling off of ten cents to the scholar, below the average of the county.

In the county of Worcester, the average sum raised upon the scholar, is \$2 30 ; but the two towns which pay the most for private instruction, raise, upon an average, but \$1 92 upon the scholar, thus falling thirty-eight cents below the average. The average sum paid on the scholar in Bristol

county, the last year, was \$2 63, and yet Pawtucket, a flourishing town in that county, paid but \$1 16 on the scholar, while their private schools were sustained at an expense of \$1,500, and Norton paid \$1 92, while \$1000 was paid to support their academy.

Examples like these could be extended to almost any length ; but I forbear. If what I have exhibited does not produce conviction, more, I fear, would fail to do it. We have made various comparisons of the towns which support select schools, with those that do not, and we find, as a general fact, that those towns which support select schools, pay less wages to teachers, and raise less money on the scholar, and far less on their valuation, than the towns that do not ; and we have no doubt, but that a personal examination of the schools themselves, would convince any one that the district schools are poorer in the former class of towns than in the latter. And to what can this be attributed, but to the influence of select schools ?

And now, gentlemen, I submit to you, whether the position with which I started, is not fully sustained. The causes which have led many of you to patronise select schools shall be attended to in their proper place ; but this is not their proper place. The question now is not, why you have taken your children from Common Schools, but what effect this course has produced upon Common Schools. I ask you to weigh the evidence which I have produced, and yield to your own convictions. I know that the practice which many of you have adopted, makes you a party to this controversy ; but, relying upon your candor, I trust that you will make all due allowance for any such bias. I now leave the question with you for the present ; and I anticipate your decision. Your good sense must lead you to the conclusion, that the cause of popular education would be better promoted, if the money and the talents now expended upon private schools, were devoted to institutions, which are free and open to all classes in the community. In my next, I will examine the reasons which are urged for putting children into private schools.

A PROFESSIONAL MAN.

[From Dr. Channing's Lecture on Self-Culture.]

DUTY OF CULTIVATING THE FACULTY OF SPEECH.

There is another power, which each man should cultivate according to his ability, but which is very much neglected in the mass of the people, and that is, the power of Utterance. A man was not made to shut up his mind in itself ; but to give it voice and to exchange it for other minds. Speech is one of our grand distinctions from the brute. Our power over others lies not so much in the amount of thought within us, as in the power of bringing it out. A man of more than ordinary intellectual vigor, may, for want of expression, be a cipher, without significance, in society. And not only does a man influence others, but he greatly aids his own intellect, by giving distinct and forcible utterance to his thoughts. We understand ourselves better, our conceptions grow clearer, by the very effort to make them clear to another. Our social rank, too, depends a good deal on our power of utterance. The principal distinction between what are called gentlemen and the vulgar lies in this, that the latter are awkward in manners, and are especially wanting in propriety, clearness, grace, and force of utterance. A man who cannot open his lips without breaking a rule of grammar, without showing in his dialect or brogue or uncouth tones his want of cultivation, or without darkening his meaning by a confused, unskilful mode of communication, cannot take the place to which perhaps his native good sense entitles him. To have intercourse with respectable people, we must speak their language. On this account, I am glad that grammar and a correct pronunciation are taught in the Common Schools of this city. These are not trifles ; nor are they superfluous to any class of

people. They give a man access to social advantages, on which his improvement very much depends. The power of utterance should be included by all in their plans of self-culture.

WORDS OFTEN MISPRONOUNCED.

cathe'dral	<i>not</i> cath'edral,
design (desīne)	" dezīne,
daunt (dant)	" dāwnt,
dauntless	" dāwntless,
draw	" dror,
discipline (disciplin)	" discipline,
draught (draft)	" drawt,
departure	" departer,
destroy	" distroy,
darning	" darnin,
desire	" dissire,
drain	" dreen,
deliverance	" dilliverance, <i>nor</i> deliv'rance,
disciples	" deciples,
downward	" downwud,
during	" durin,
dawning	" dawnin,
directly	" directly,
distrib'ute	" dis'tribute,
disappointment	" disappointment,
difficulty	" diffikilty,
descry	" discry,
dāngerous	" dāngerous,
deliberately	" deliberately, <i>nor</i> dilliberately,
education	" eddication,
ex'quisite	" exquis'ite,
entered	" entud,
earliest	" arliest,
eternity	" eternty,
enduring	" endoorring, <i>nor</i> endurin,
exercise	" exussise,
eating	" eatin,
enraptured	" enraptered,
eloquence	" aloquence,
every	" ev'ry,
exists	" exiss,
earthen	" earthern, <i>nor</i> airthen.

KINGSTON REPORT.

If it is true of a town, as it is said to be of a man, that he is half cured when he knows he is sick, then the town of Kingston, with all its alarming symptoms, is in a fair way for recovery. The subjoined Report, printed for general circulation, would make a good appendix to one of those Fourth of July orations, wherein we praise ourselves for our devotion to the interests of Common Schools. Let it be remembered, however, that the town is more singular in the honorable frankness, with which it speaks of its schoolhouses, than it is in their deplorable condition. If none, but those who are without sin, venture to cast the first stone, the town, even after its confession, is in little danger.

There is one way in which this Report may be made a proud, instead of a humiliating, document for the people, whose condition it exposes. Let them erect such schoolhouses as such a wealthy town ought to have, and then they may look back with an honorable and a laudable satisfaction to the evils they have remedied.

FELLOW CITIZENS :—In compliance with the Statute of the Commonwealth, passed April 13th, 1838, your School Committee would ask leave to make the following Report of the condition of the Public Schools in this town.

In entering upon this task, your Committee would observe, that the system of Education which was commenced nearly or quite two hundred years since, (when our country was in its infancy,) can hardly be supposed to be adapted, in all its parts, to the wants of the present day. And though alterations have been made, from time to time, there still exist great and grievous defects which our Board of Education and Legislature are laboring to remedy. In no one instance of legislation did our ancestors show their wisdom more clearly, than in establishing Free Schools throughout New England. They well knew the multiplied sources of happiness which would be opened to the people by a good education. They well knew that the rights of property would be more secure, that their political, civil, and religious liberties would be more highly prized and more safely guarded in proportion as the great body of the people were well informed and instructed. The facilities secured by this system in the early days of our colonies were doubtless all that could be afforded for the education of the then rising generation. But while we have been coursing on in the old track, the people of other countries, and their sovereigns, too, have awakened to the subject and have been making great improvements in their systems of education, till we have almost lost that high place and standing as a nation which we once sustained. The people of Prussia, though under an absolute monarch, have a more thorough and perfect system of education than any State in New England. Are there not then strong reasons for our moving in this matter and endeavoring to improve the character of our public schools?

It was doubtless to aid in the accomplishment of this object, that our Legislature passed the act requiring this new duty of the school committee—to give a detailed account of the means of instruction in their several towns,—this being the easiest and most expeditious way of bringing the subject before the whole people.

Time out of mind you have chosen your superintending and prudential school committees—voted to raise more or less money for the support of schools, and then left the whole matter to work out its way for the year. And the only notice taken of the schools, has been the complaint, that the scholars do not learn so much as in olden times, when but half the money now appropriated for schools was expended: or that there are too many studies, and the time and attention of the scholars are so divided, that they gain but little advantage from the schools. Complaints, too, are often made (and with more foundation for them than those just mentioned) that the instructors are not properly qualified and have not the tact at governing the scholars as in former days, and that the money is often spent and wasted to little purpose. Those who make these complaints, forget, that in these later times, parental discipline has been greatly relaxed, and they may thank themselves for the greater share of this cause of complaint. They forget, too, that in olden times men kept school by the year, that it was often their profession, and they were of course more skilled in the art of teaching the branches then required, than many of those who attempt to keep school at the present day. This change has been made to accommodate the children in each section of the town with a school at their own door. Hardly one schoolmaster in ten, at the present day, thinks of making school-keeping a continued employment. They take it up for a few months, each winter, to enable them to discharge their own tuition bills, while at some academy or university.

That there are more branches of education now taught in our public schools than formerly is, undoubtedly true, but, as we think and believe, there are no more than are required by the changes which have taken place in the times. That a scholar generally should have but three or four branches on hand at once is equally true, as that some scholars can attend faithfully to more than that number. The main difficulty in regard to books lies here, that the masters have, till within a few years, been allowed to say what books should be used in the several schools, so that there would be in town as many different works upon the same branch of study, as there were schools in the town, and in the course of a few years, by a change of masters, there would be as many in each school. This course divided the schools into small classes, so that the time and attention of the instructor was frittered away and much of his usefulness destroyed. The committee, for several years past, have been endeavoring to remedy this evil, and have reduced the number of works from upwards of thirty to about twenty, and hope to reduce the number still further without injury to the scholars.

We have intimated that the people are not sufficiently awake to the increasing importance of our public schools. Who that has witnessed one of our annual town meetings, but on

reflection will say, that subjects of the most trifling moment engage the whole attention of our citizens, while those which concern them most vitally, hardly receive a passing notice. Is not this true? Some question concerning schools or the education of your children comes up for consideration; few pay any attention to the matter; just enough raise their hands for the moderator to declare the vote, and there the matter rests and no one ever thinks of it again. But let another question which comes annually before the people be raised, and the citizens of our quiet village are divided into equal parties warmly contending against each other, till all the angry passions are aroused and each side strives furiously for the supremacy. Suppose by chance a stranger passing by and hearing the war of words looks in upon the scene, what would be his first impression? Why, surely, that one party are undermining the liberties of the other, or conspiring to overthrow the liberties of the country. What would be his surprise, and mortification, too, to learn that he had stopped to hear all this confusion and hubbub raised by the question, whether fifteen or twenty cents should be the price of a hundred herrings?

We do not believe that our people would be so indifferent to this subject were they to think upon and consider the same attentively. We believe that you only want to be convinced of the evils and of the magnitude of their pernicious tendency, to apply the remedy. That there are defects in our schools, which the parents alone can remedy, we think there can be no doubt. One is, a want of punctuality and constant attendance at the schools. By registers kept by the instructors in the several schools during the past year, of the attendance and absence of each and every scholar, it appears that more than one fourth part of the time of the scholars is lost by absence,—which in many if not most cases could be prevented by their parents. The following statement was collected from those registers. There were *two hundred and twenty-one* scholars attending the public schools during the summer of 1838, and an average attendance of only *one hundred and sixty-four*, or there were continually absent *fifty-seven*; and during the past winter there were *two hundred and thirty-eight* scholars and an average of *one hundred and eighty-one*, leaving as above *fifty-seven* absentees. Here, then, is one cause, why the children do not learn more than they do.

There is another evil equally as fatal to the education of your children, and one which you alone can remedy—and that is the almost total unfitness of your schoolhouses for the purposes intended. And in mentioning their defects, we are not troubled to find them, so much as we are to make a proper selection, from the numerous catalogue which present themselves. We will mention a few of the most obvious; and though you may have thought of them often by themselves, you have not considered the important effect which, *united*, they may and do have upon the happiness and lives of your children.

And will any one ask, what ails the schoolhouses we now have? To such a one and every one we would say, there is not a single public schoolhouse in town that is not a disgrace to us, and a sure and inevitable cause of much sickness and continued ill health to many of your children.

Let us take, for instance, the house in District No. 1, or Rocky Nook. It is in one of the bleakest and most exposed situations in the district, perched upon a sand hill with but little more than half the land it stands on belonging to the district; projecting six feet into the highway and liable at any time to be cut down by the surveyor; without an inch of ground around it for the children to exercise upon, or even retire for the calls of nature, without trespassing, and even then exposed to the gaze of every passer by in the streets, any where within a quarter of a mile of the house. What sort of a place is this, to send your sons and daughters to learn that most desirable of all virtues, modesty? Shame upon the inhabitants of the district, for suffering such an evil, every day staring them in the face, to continue. But this district is not alone; every schoolhouse in town is similarly situated, though two are favored by the shades of the surrounding forests.

You may talk of moral reform till you are gray, and what good will it do, while during the whole education of your children, they are every day forced to expose their nakedness? Where are the women of our town engaged in looking into these matters? Why have they never taken notice of this crying evil, an evil sufficient to account for all the want of chastity in any people?

But to return to this seminary of learning in Rocky Nook. 'Tis painted, 't is true, on the outside, but 't is the only one in town thus liberally endowed. Then, too, it has windows, but any one on examination would say, that they fitted the frames in which they are set, no better than a starved Grahamite would the clothes of the most corpulent man in the village. The walls were formerly covered with an article called mortar, but they are so changed by time, so colored by smoke, (which we believe is all that preserves them in their present state,) that no one would guess their covering. Aided and assisted by the gentle showers of heaven, from which the roof affords no other protection than that of a sponge, oozing quietly through, the floor may now and then know that there is still such a thing under the sun as water, though any one on seeing the floor might well doubt the fact. Between the casing of the side walls (which is plentifully supplied with knot-holes) and

the plastering, are numerous apertures, which seem to be made for the supply of fresh air for the noses of those children who are so fortunate, on this account, as to sit near them ; but then they produce other effects not so desirable, such as colds, coughs, and sore throats, too often seeds of consumption to many a promising youth.

Confinement is never pleasant, under any circumstances. Who is there that would accept the wealth of the Indies in exchange for fresh air and the free use of his limbs ? And yet you crowd from forty to sixty children into that ill-constructed, miserable shell of a building, there to sit in the most uncomfortable seats that could be contrived, expecting that with the occasional application of the birch, they will sit still for six hours in the day, from four to six months in the year, and then come out learned in all the mysteries of knowledge, educated for manhood or womanhood. Now it is a fact beyond dispute, that in a room of that size, (say sixteen by twenty-four feet,) thirty-five children will render the air unfit for breathing in forty-five minutes. To be sure, some fresh air is admitted by the numerous cracks and crevices all around, but, allowing one fourth for this, and after one hour, the children are injured by every breath they draw. The injury at each breath is small, we grant. But who, that has been confined in a crowded schoolroom, or any other room, has not felt the want of fresh air ; an article with which the Almighty has supplied us in greater quantities than any other, but only in proportion to our wants. Who has not felt the dull headach—the pressure of the brain, as it seems, (when in fact it is cruel *oppression*,)—the dizzy, sleepy drowsiness of a schoolroom atmosphere ? Who does not remember the new life and animation, the renewed strength and courage he has often felt, when he has emerged from one of these real prisons, to breathe the pure air of heaven ?

There is but one house, with one room, in District No. 2, (or the middle district,) for the accommodation of one hundred and fifty scholars, or nearly half the number of children in town, between the ages of four and sixteen : as the seats are now arranged, it will accommodate about one third of that number, and no more. 'Tis not half so comfortable as some of the stables and barns in its neighborhood. It has been a standing regulation to exclude all children under the age of eight years from the winter schools in this district ; a regulation unavoidable on account of the want of room in the schoolhouse. By this rule, from twenty to thirty children have to be provided with private instruction, or go entirely without. And during the past winter, your committee felt it to be their duty to extend this prohibition to all those under the age of nine and a half years. This extension excluded twenty more, who were placed in a like case with those before mentioned, still leaving upwards of eighty scholars, or one third more than the house can accommodate. There are, then, in this district, from forty to fifty children, at the right age to attend school, deprived of those means of instruction which you are in duty bound to afford them. The Legislature have just passed a law by which, when schools have fifty scholars as the average number, the district or town to which such school belongs shall provide a female assistant for their schools. It is, however, left optional with the districts or towns to do contrary, if so disposed. Your committee cannot fail to recommend to the inhabitants of this district, (if the town do not take the matter in hand,) to erect a spacious house, with two separate apartments for a male and female teacher—in order that the smaller as well as the larger children, may be alike supplied with the means of instruction. We must, however, leave the whole subject to your own good sense, which we hope and believe will lead you to do justice to yourselves and your children.

The house in No. 3., or Northwest—how shall we speak of that ? Clear away the surrounding forests which protect it, and before the next "*line gale*" is over, the foundation stones on which it rests would be all that would remain of it. Already aware of the danger, the mice have forsaken it, as the committee can well attest, for they saw them on the move at their last visit to the school.

The houses in Nos. 4 and 5, are of later origin ; but they are equally ill constructed and contrived, with as few accommodations as any in town.

Such, then, is our answer to the question, what ails the schoolhouses we already have ?

And now, we say, we want five new, handsome and commodious schoolhouses, constructed according to the most approved models, with every convenience which such institutions need ; we want them properly ventilated, and the seats comfortably constructed ; the walls should be adorned with charts and maps, geometrical figures, and philosophical apparatus, so that the children may learn something useful wherever they turn their eyes—so that the child shall delight to go to school above all other places—and not covered as they are now, with the first engines of war, which the little urchins manufacture from the spare leaves of their books, in other words, spit-balls, daubs of ink, and even obscene writing, and representations that would make a parent of any sensibility shudder at the thought of sending a child to such a place.

We wish our public schools and schoolhouses were more known and better understood. It is because they are so little known that they are so little attended to ; and the reverse is equally true. Not more than a dozen or fifteen heads of families throughout the town, ever think of visiting our public schools, where they send their sons and daughters, year

after year, to learn that which may be for their weal or wo through all time. And the children, seeing so little interest felt by their parents in the schools, take comparatively less interest in their studies than they would were their parents more alive to their duties, and more ready to furnish them with the facilities which they need for their education.

It is time that something was done to raise the character of our public schools; something, too, that shall encourage others around us to exertion in the same cause.

Fellow citizens: seven-eighths of your children are educated in these schools, and receive there all the elements of instruction which they ever obtain. It is there that the main body of our community are reared; the rank and file, ay, and thank God, the commanders too, notwithstanding all the disadvantages they have to encounter. What responsibility, then, rests upon those who have the means to improve the condition of our public schools!

There is no use in mincing these matters. How few men there are in our town who are willing to undertake the duties of selectman and assessor. Whence arises this diffidence and distrust of their own powers? 'Tis not for want of natural capacity, sound sense, or a good understanding. 'Tis because in their youth they had not proper facilities of education, to enable them to use their faculties to the best advantage. How many men there are who would take no pleasure in reading an interesting book, and yet they are not wanting in tact, or looking out for number one in a bargain. How many women too, who hardly know how to write, (we will not say their names, for too many petitions could be produced to the contrary,) but a letter, to fold it up and direct it properly when written, and even make much ado about wording an excuse for their children being late at school. These things ought not so to be; and you are called upon by every means in your power to prevent the like misfortunes happening to your children.

We have spoken thus plainly upon this subject, because we believed it to be our duty. We have no sinister motives in thus explaining our views. We have no other than the kindest feelings towards those whom you hold most dear, those who are to comfort and support you in your declining years, those who are to fill the stations which you now fill, but will, in a few years, by the inevitable decrees of an all-wise Providence, surrender into their care and keeping, to be transmitted to the latest generation.

All which is respectfully submitted, and signed by order of the Board.

Kingston, March 25, 1839.

JOSEPH S. BEAL, *Secretary.*

“Not far from two centuries ago, the Scottish Legislature enacted, ‘that a good and sufficient school shall be erected and maintained in every parish.’ To these five little words, ‘a good and sufficient school,’ introduced into an Act of Parliament, not longer than a man’s thumb, is Scotland indebted, at this day, for nearly every solid glory she possesses.”

“It cannot too often be repeated, that it is the master that makes the school. And, indeed, what a well-assorted union of qualities is required to constitute a good schoolmaster!” “A bad schoolmaster is a scourge to a community; and though we may often have to be contented with indifferent ones, we must do our best to improve their quality.”

The Superintendent of the Public Schools of the city of Providence, is to be appointed by the School Committee, at an early day. This officer will be elected annually, by ballot; and will be subject to removal, in case of inability or mismanagement. He will be required to devote himself, exclusively, to the duties of his station; and, under the advice and direction of the School Committee, he will have the superintendence of all the Public Schools of the city, and of the School Houses, estates, apparatus, and furniture. The Schools, as now established by law, are seventeen in number, exclusive of schools for colored children, and are of the following descriptions, viz: one High School, six Grammar and Writing Schools, and ten Primary Schools. The City Council has fixed the salary of the Superintendent at twelve hundred and fifty dollars per annum.

All persons who may desire to be considered as candidates for the office, are requested to transmit their applications in writing, postage paid, to the undersigned.

Providence, R. I.

WILLIAM G. GODDARD,
Chairman of the Board of Examiners.